



Operational Stress in Detainee Operations at Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay Cuba

Scott Johnston, PhD, ABPP

CDR MSC USN

Stephanie Raducha, BA
Gali Goldwasser, PhD

Elizabeth J. Abou, BA
Douglas C. Johnson, PhD

Naval Center for Combat & Operational Stress Control



Introduction

- NCCOSC collaboration
- Combat tours vs. GTMO deployment
- Questions
 - Stress / PTSD
 - Working outside of rate
 - Beliefs of mental health





Life as a Guard at GTMO

- History
 - Camp X-Ray
- Safe, humane, legal and transparent care
- Spotlight of the world
- Tropical paradise





Sample

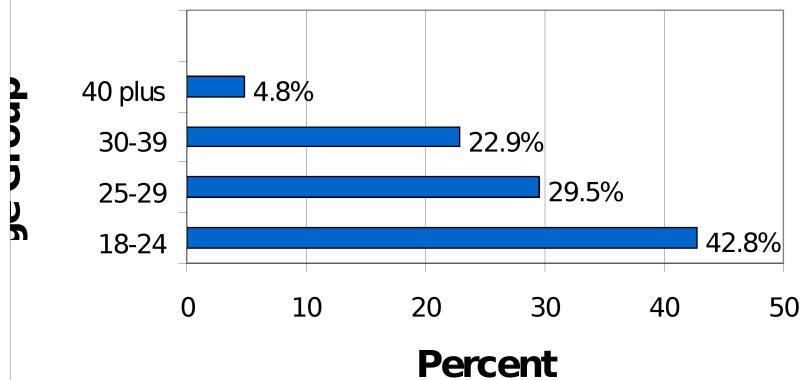


- $N = 498$
- Guards and medical personnel
- Mid-deployment
- Self report surveys
- August 2009 – November 2009

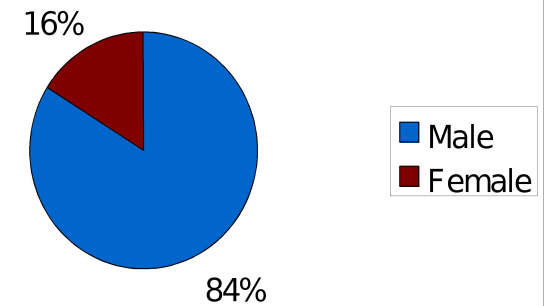


GTMO Guard Demographics

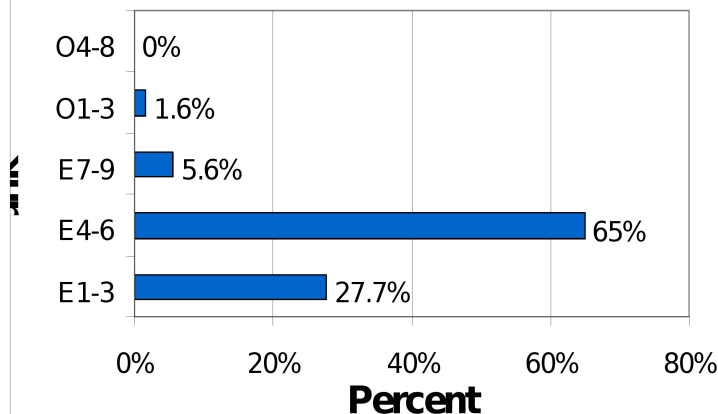
Age



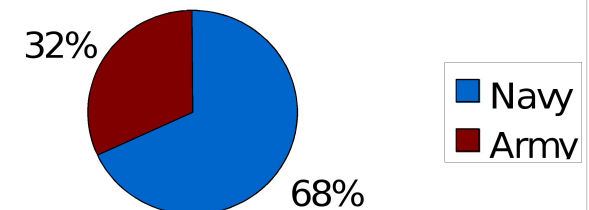
Sex



Rank (Pay Grade)



Military Branch



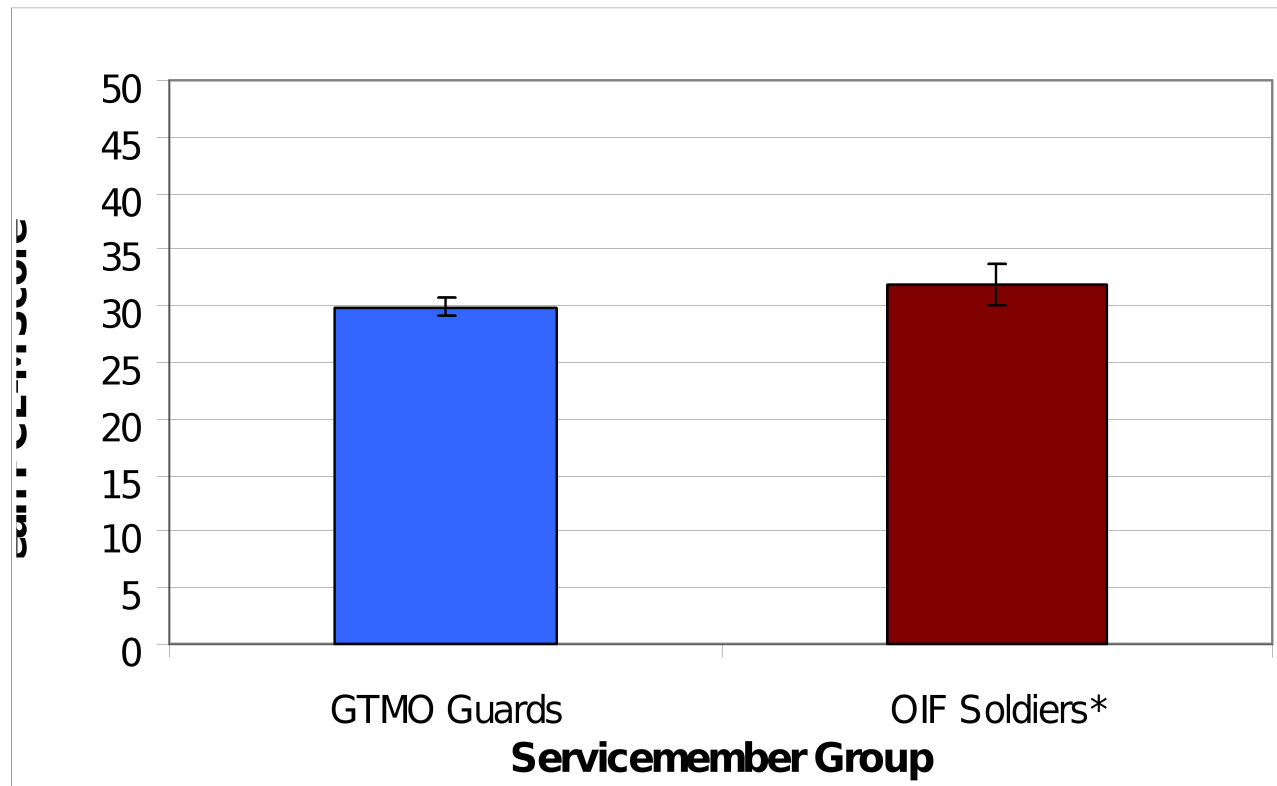


Measures

- PTSD Checklist – military (PCL-M)
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)
- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)
- Response to Stressful Experiences Scale (RSES)
- Beliefs about Psychotherapy
- Neurocognitive Survey – Alcohol Section
- NEO-N



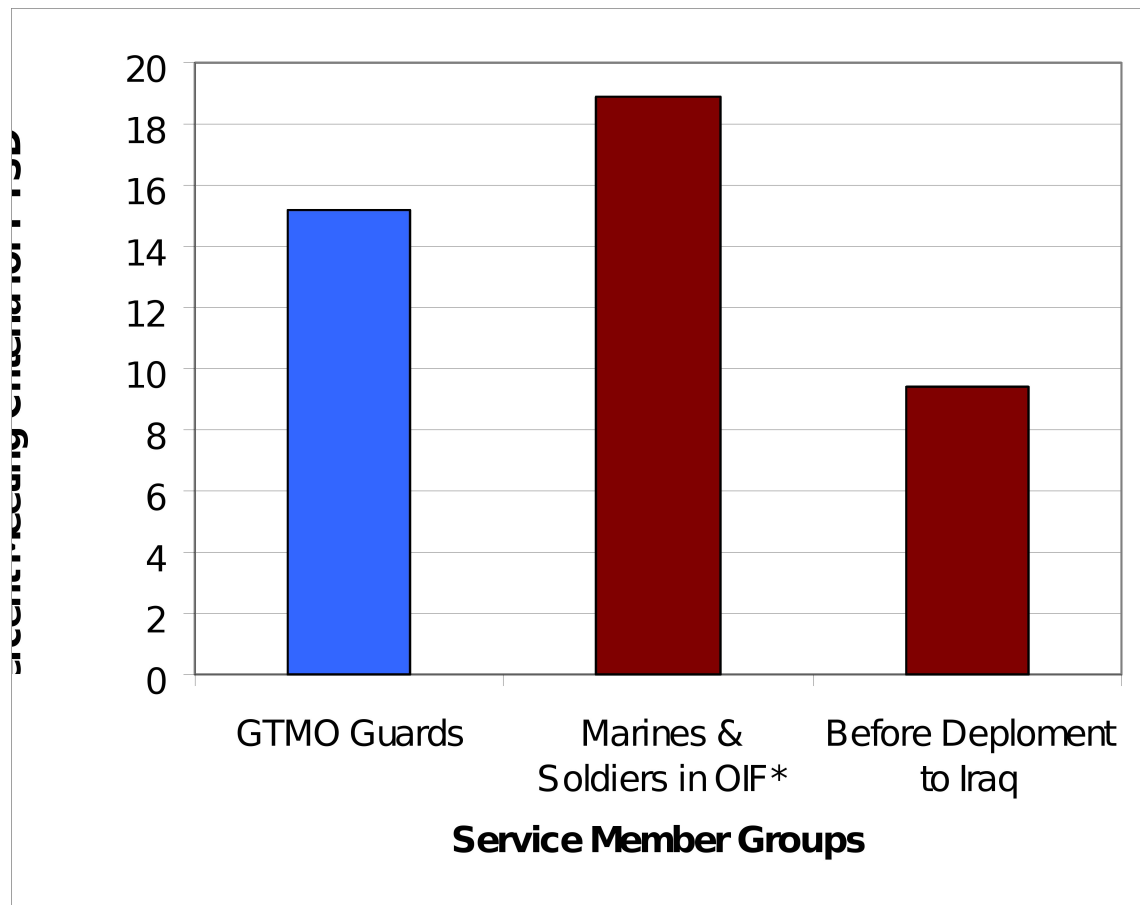
PTSD Symptoms for GTMO Population vs. Combat Population



*Operation Iraqi Freedom National Guard Soldiers with moderate combat exposure who served from 2005 to 2006. (Renshaw et al., 2009).



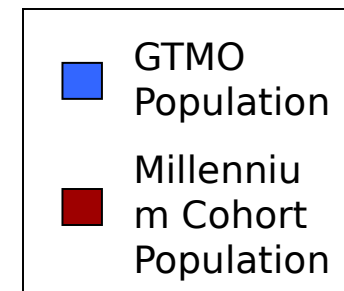
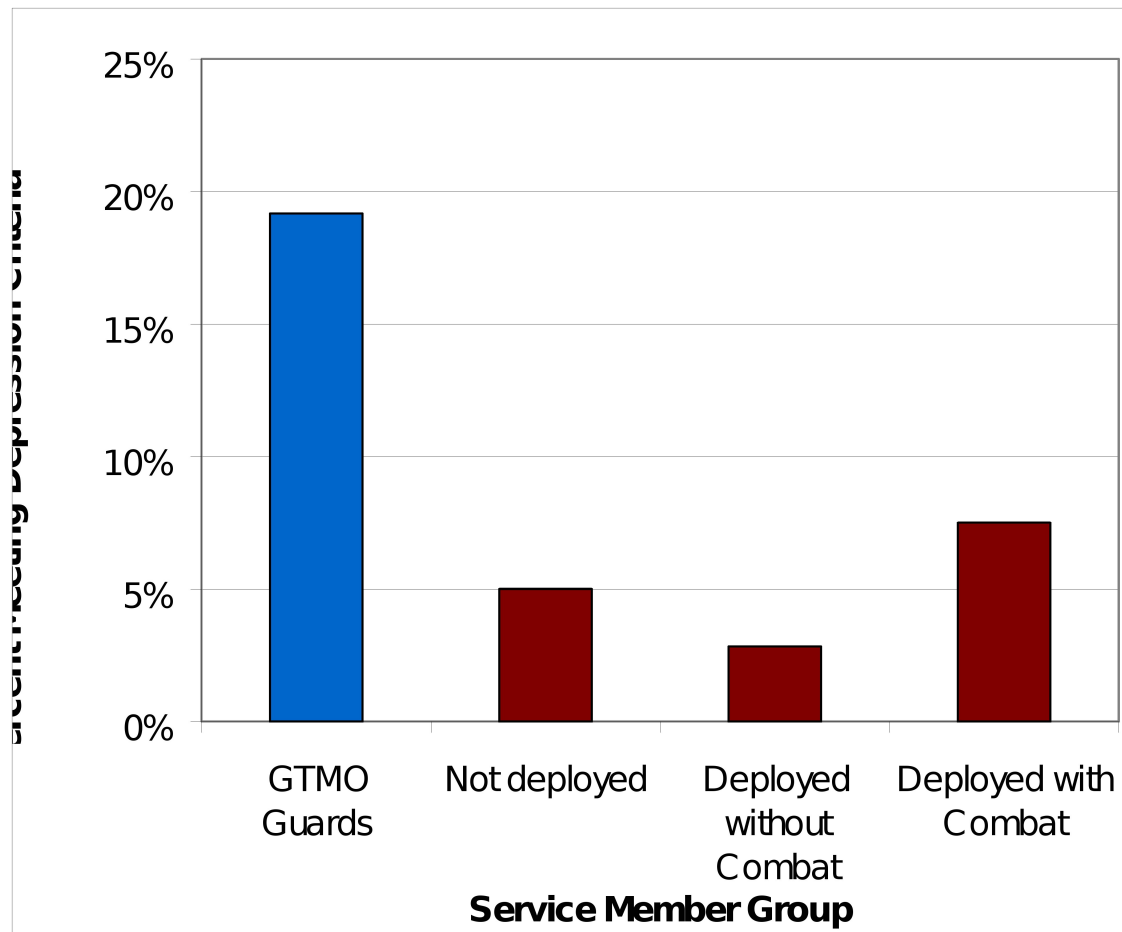
GTMO PTSD Rates Compared to Combat Vets and Pre-Deployment Rates



*Marines and Soldiers exposed to combat while deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom, Hoge et al., 2004. Based on PCL-M symptoms endorsed.



Depression in GTMO Guards vs. Other Service Members



*Millennium Cohort data from: Wells et al., 2010. Depression criteria based on PHQ-9 score of 10 or greater.



Increased risk for Depression

- Hypotheses
 - Psychological vs. kinetic warfare
 - Constriction vs. small unit autonomy





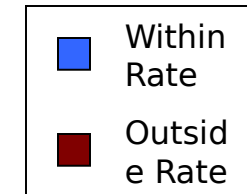
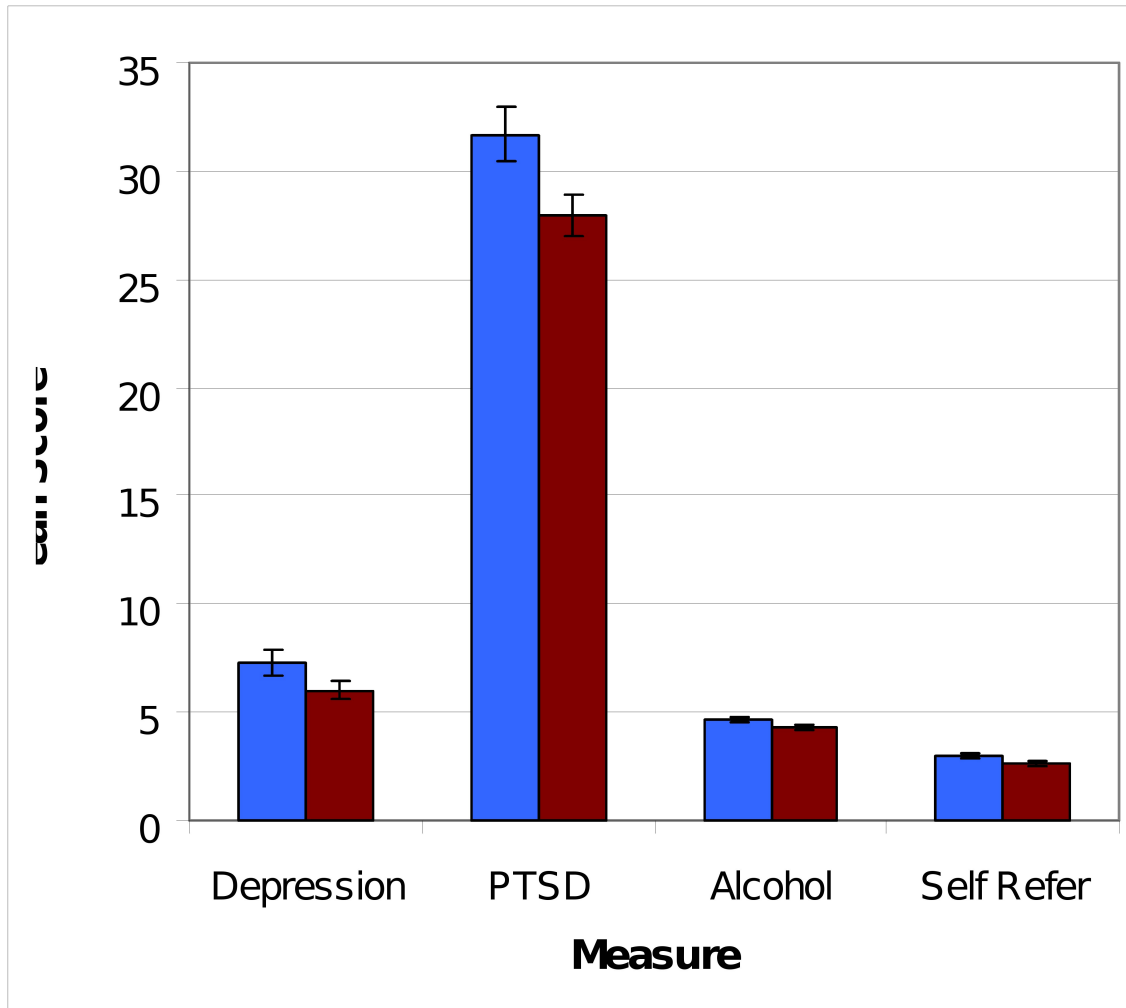
Working outside of your rate

- Rate = job
- 52% work outside their regular job
- Training as resilience factor





Working Within vs. Outside Rate



*All reported results are statistically significant ($p < .05$).
Depression - Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9); PTSD - PTSD Checklist - Military (PCL-M); Alcohol - CAGE Alcohol - primary care alcohol screener; Self refer - based on question: If you believed you had a mental health problem, would you ask for professional help?

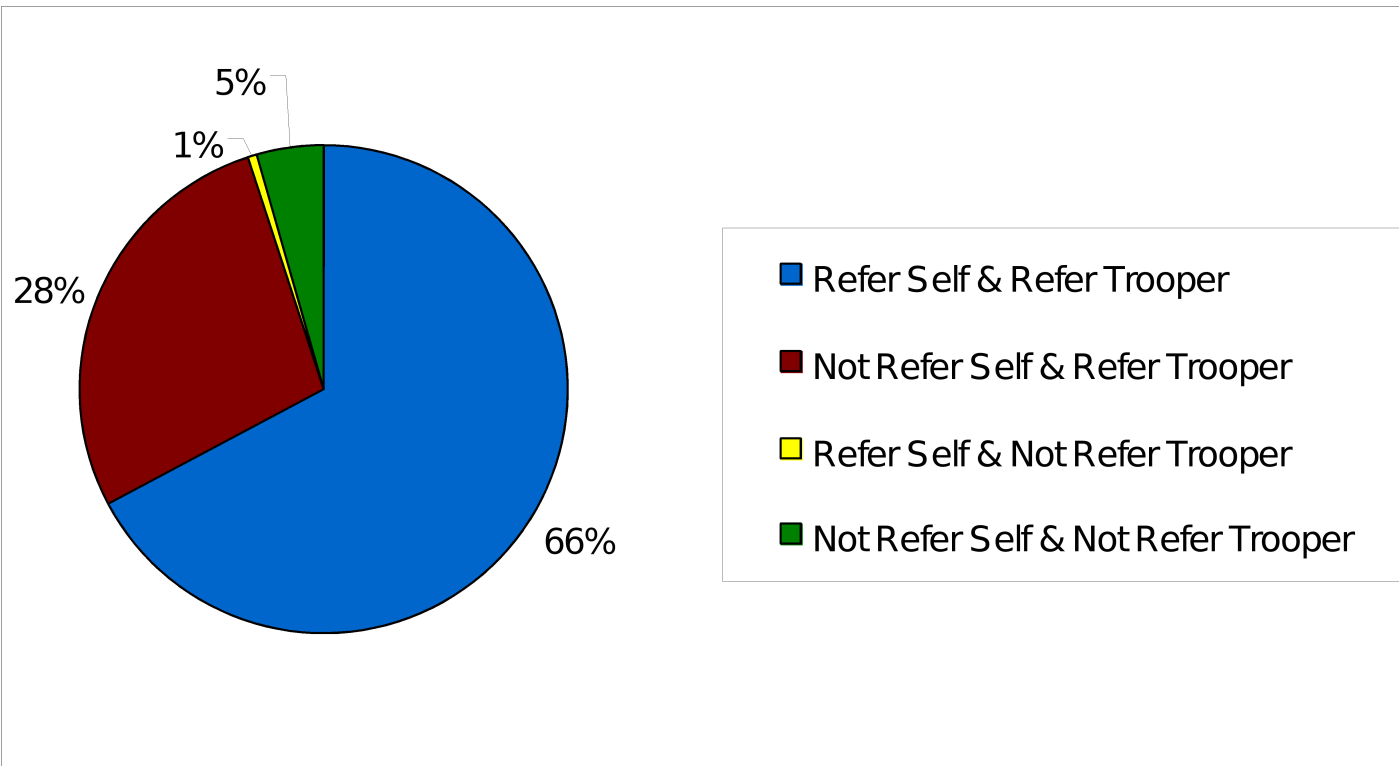


Beliefs in Mental Health

- Stigma
 - 50% don't seek care
- If you believed you had a mental health problem, would you ask for professional help?
- If you believed you had a trooper under your leadership that had a mental health problem, would you refer them for professional help?



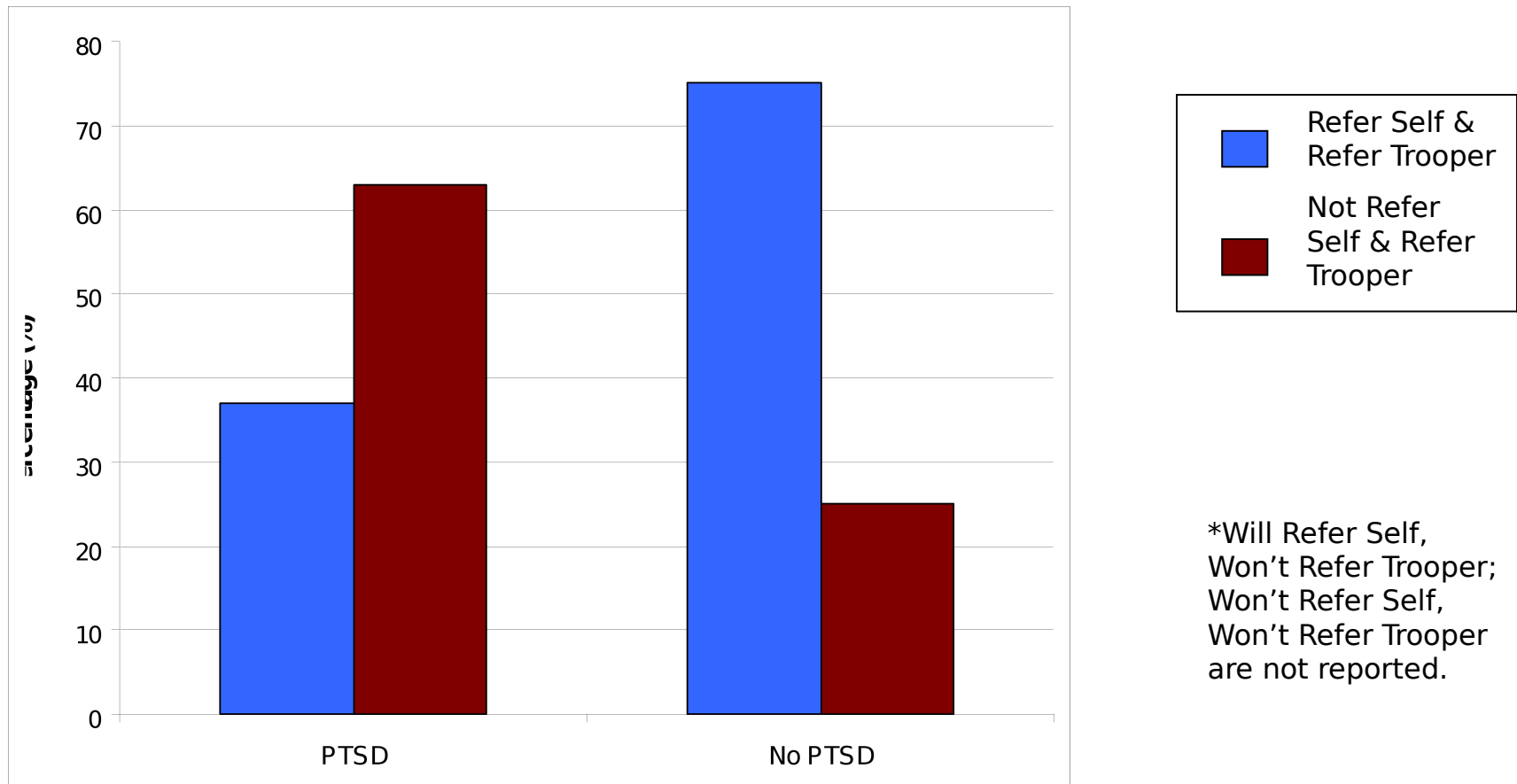
Willingness to Refer to Mental Health Treatment



* Based on questions:
1) If you believed you had a mental health problem, would you ask for professional help? 2) If you believed you had a trooper under your leadership that had a mental health problem, would you refer them for professional help?

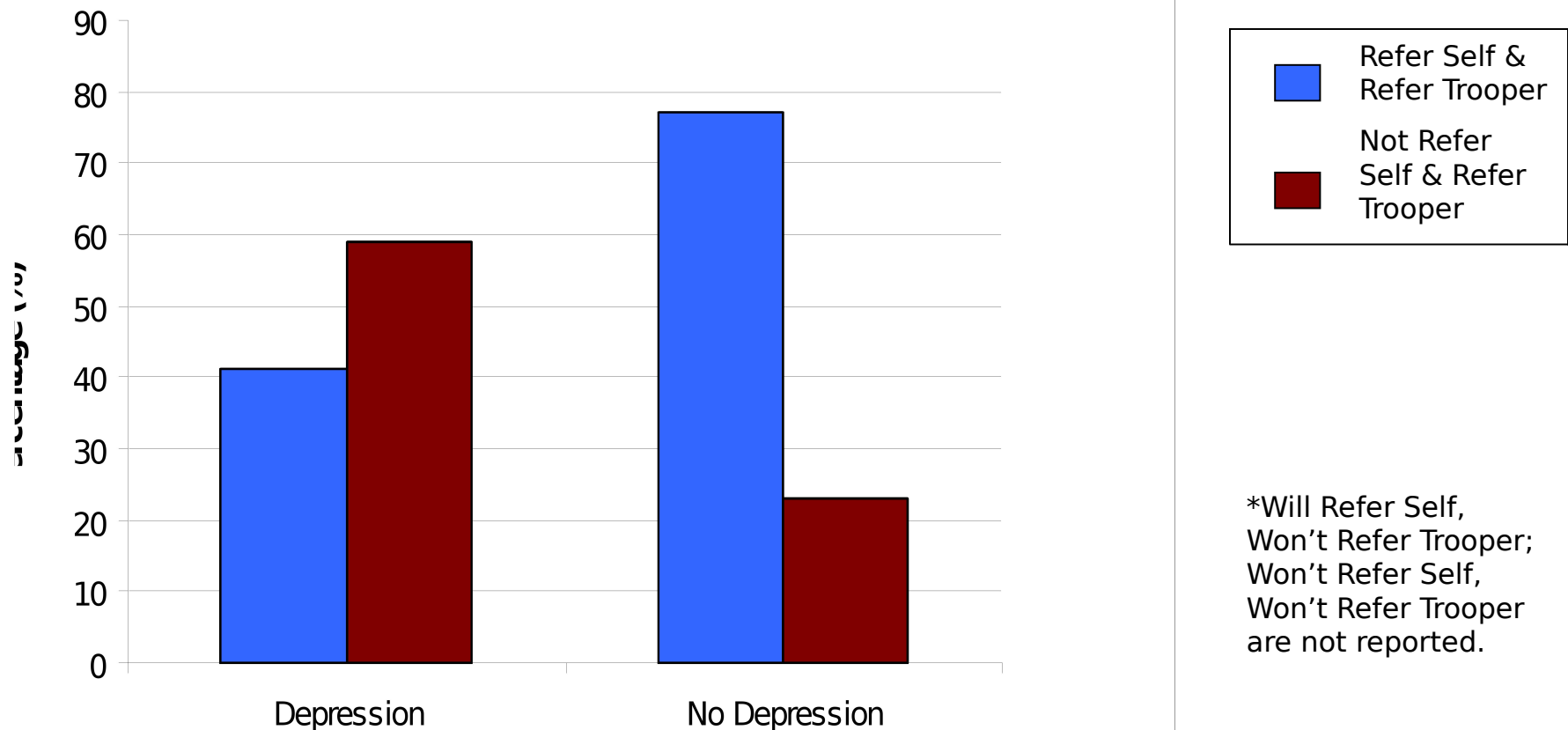


Willingness to Refer with or without PTSD





Willingness to Refer with and without Depression





Conclusions

- Detainee operations are stressful
 - Higher risk for depression
- Protective quality of working outside rate
- Stigma is present
 - More likely to refer other than self
 - Those at risk are less likely to seek mental health



Questions



CDR Scott Johnston
scott.johnston@med.navy.mil